



Bahrain Participates in 13th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum

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UN chief denounces 'cruellest phase' of Gaza conflict



AFP | United Nations, United States

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres yesterday said "Palestinians in Gaza are enduring what may be the cruellest phase of this cruel conflict" as Israel ramps up its mil-

itary offensive. "For nearly 80 days, Israel blocked the entry of life-saving international aid," he said in a statement. "The entire population of Gaza is facing the risk of famine."

"The Israeli military offensive is intensifying with atrocious levels of death and destruction. "Today, 80% of Gaza has been

either designated an Israeli-militarized zone or an area where people have been ordered to leave."

Israel resumed major operations in Gaza on March 18, ending a two-month ceasefire.

Aid also began trickling into the Gaza Strip on Monday for the first time in more than two

months, amid condemnation of the Israeli blockade that sparked severe shortages of food and medicine.

"Israel has clear obligations under international humanitarian law," Guterres said. "As the occupying power, it must agree to allow and facilitate the aid that is needed."

Trump signs orders to boost US nuclear energy

Washington, United States

President Donald Trump signed a series of executive orders yesterday to boost nuclear energy in the United States, including by rolling back regulatory processes on a still divisive technology. "We're signing tremendous executive orders today that really will make us the real power in this industry," Trump told reporters as he penned the four orders in the Oval Office. Trump's orders aim to speed up the building of new reactors and to boost domestic mining and enriching of uranium, with the United States relying on imports for most of the crucial fuel.

Latest round of US-Iran nuclear talks ends in Rome

AFP | Rome, Italy

Iran's foreign minister described nuclear talks with the United States as "complicated", following the conclusion of a fifth round of discussions in Rome yesterday.

"The negotiations are too complicated to be resolved in two or three meetings," Iranian Foreign Minister and lead negotiator Abbas Araghchi said, as the Oman-mediated talks concluded. Omani Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi had said on X, that the fifth round concluded "with some but not conclusive progress", adding that he hoped "the remaining issues" would be clarified in the coming days.

79 miners rescued from S.African shaft, over 100 still underground

AFP | Westonia, S. Africa

Rescuers have hoisted 79 miners who were stuck in a gold mine outside Johannesburg but more than 100 were still trapped underground, the mine's operator said yesterday.

At least 260 miners were trapped underground on Thursday at the Kloof gold mine, 60 kilometres (37 miles) west of Johannesburg, after a hoist used to access the shaft was damaged in an accident, the mining company Sibanye-Stillwater said.



Fintech booms to billions

A 12-fold leap by 2032 positions Bahrain as Gulf's rising fintech force

● **Central Bank reforms and Gulf's first fintech sandbox boost growth**

● **Real-time payments to hit 77% of transactions by 2028**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain is all set to become a fintech powerhouse in the Gulf, with the sector poised for a twelvefold leap to BD10.4 billion by 2032.

This meteoric rise from BD831 million in 2023, according to research firm DataCube, highlights Bahrain's growing dominance as a leading digital finance hub in the region.

Powering up this transformation is bold regulatory reforms and a wave of innovation by the Central Bank of Bahrain.

CBB's proactive stance has set the tone for the region. From launching

the Arabian Gulf's first regulatory sandbox to establishing a specialised fintech unit, the CBB has laid the groundwork for a thriving digital ecosystem. New regulations now guide everything from digital banking and crypto-assets to open banking, crowdfunding, and online payment platforms.

Instant payment services are surging ahead, with Mastercard forecasting the real-time payment market to hit BD564 million by 2028 — accounting for 77% of all financial transactions in Bahrain. Digital wallets and mobile payment apps are also expanding fast, expected to reach a market value of BD8.36 billion within the same timeframe.

Highlighting Bahrain's fintech leadership, Forbes named four Bahraini companies among the Middle East's top 50 fintech firms in 2025: Tarabut Gateway (open banking), EazyPay (payments), and crypto platforms CoinMENA and Rain. Excluding Tarabut, these firms processed transactions worth over BD5.47 billion last year.

Bahrain's Electronic Fund Transfer System (EFTS), alongside the widely used BenefitPay app and its services — including Fawri, Fawri+, and Fawateer — saw transaction volumes soar to BD33 billion in 2024 alone.

According to DataCube, financial services, banking, and insurance are expected to generate around 21% of Bahrain's total fintech revenue by 2032, up from 17.2% of GDP today. The sector's growth is broad, spanning digi-



Over 80% of Bahrain's population uses digital payment platforms like BenefitPay — making it one of the most digitally engaged economies in the region.



Blazing milestone

UAE hits hottest May on record at 50.4C

AFP | Dubai, United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates recorded yesterday its highest temperature for May since

it began documenting them in 2003 at a sweltering 50.4 degrees Celsius, according to the National Center of Meteorology.

"The highest temperature recorded over the country today is

50.4°C in Al Shawamekh (Abu Dhabi) at 14:30 UAE Local time," it said in a post on X.

"This is the highest temperature we've ever recorded (for May) since we started keeping

records in 2003," the NCM told AFP.

That topped the highest temperature of 50.2 Celsius recorded in May 2009, said the centre.

Top Indian lawmakers land in Bahrain for strategic talks

TDT | Manama

A high-level delegation from India will arrive in Bahrain for a two-day visit today.

Mr. Baijayant Panda, Member of Parliament, leads the delegates which has Members of Parliament, senior political personalities and former Diplomats.

They will hold a series of meetings with senior officials and key stakeholders in Bahrain. The visit comes in the immediate aftermath of the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam and subsequent developments, adding significance to the diplomatic engagement.

India and Bahrain enjoy a longstanding and robust bilateral relationship, marked by strong political ties and growing economic cooperation. In 2023-24, bilateral trade reached USD 1.7 billion, positioning India among Bahrain's top five trading partners.

Investment links have also deepened, with a 40% increase in two-way investments since 2019. From the first quarter of 2023 to the first quarter of 2024 alone, Indian investments in Bahrain rose by USD 200 million, bringing total mutual investments to USD 1.56 billion.



Baijayant Panda

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